

A Guide to District Support for School Planning

Summer 2021

School planning can be a first step to successful improvement work in schools. The extent to which districts support the school planning process is a district level decision. However, districts do have the responsibility each year of reviewing and approving school level plans. Below is a list of strategies districts might use to support the school planning process.

Step 1: Set Expectations with School Leaders and Approvers

As districts plan for supporting school planning, leaders should consider the specific expectations they want to establish as a district, as well as how they will communicate those expectations. This document provides some considerations for setting district expectations for school planning.

Timeline

When should the team start working on the plan? Who should they engage in its creation?

When will the first draft need to be submitted?

When will they receive the first round of feedback?

What trainings or supports will be provided and when?

What are the district's expectations for revisions or monitoring throughout the year?

Quality

How will the district define a quality plan?

What tools or resources will the district provide to planners and reviewers to promote quality?

Look at the school planning rubric [here](#).

How might the district adapt this rubric to match the district's expectations for school level plans?

What specific expectations does the district have for school plans?

- What connections to district LEA plan are expected?
- What connections or alignment to LEA goals and strategies is expected?
- What connections to certain initiatives or legislation is expected? (ex. ESSER, Read 360, Summer school)
- Are there any additional expectations for any schools identified as ATSI/TSI/Priority? How will the district ensure that these schools are meeting the needs of the student groups for which they have been identified?

Reviewers

Who will review the plans?

What should feedback look and sound like? What tools should reviewers use for providing feedback?

When should the first round of feedback be complete?

When should the final reviews be complete?

Approval

Who will approve the final plans?

What is the process for submitting for final approval?

When should plans be submitted for final approval?

Step 2: Provide Training to School Leaders and Approvers

One way districts can support quality planning is by providing school leaders and approvers with training and support during the planning process. Below are some resources district leaders can use to provide training on improvement planning to district and school leaders.

Continuous improvement planning for school leaders: This slide deck can be customized by district leaders to include the expectations for quality that its leadership team has defined in order to support school leaders or the school planning team in creating a high quality improvement plan.

Preparing to Give Feedback on School Level Plans: This slide deck can be customized by district leaders to include the expectations for quality that its leadership team has defined in order to support reviewers in providing quality feedback.

Step 3: Establish Routine Check-ins and Monitoring of the School Plans

School improvement plans are only as helpful as they are living and breathing documents that guide the work and reflection of school leaders. Districts may consider implementing check-in structures and protocols that focus on progress towards the school plan. Below are some resources district leaders can use to establish routine check-ins, as well as some protocols they might use to facilitate those meetings.

Schedule Template and Roles/Responsibilities for Check-in Meetings: This resource can be adapted and used to create a schedule and expectation for check-ins on school plans throughout a school year. It can help you define who should be included and the role for each person in attendance.

After Action Review Protocol: This protocol can be used to facilitate check-in meetings on progress towards school level goals.

District Level Reflection Protocol: This protocol can be used by district leaders to reflect on the check-in meetings and progress of schools to determine next steps for district level support or intervention.